Pricing of Petroleum Products

421. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether demands have been made from various quarters to inquire into the reason behind the Government's decision to reduce the price of Naptha and charging higher on diesel, petrol and kerosene despite sharp fall in international price of petroleum products;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are aware that kickbacks are involved in changing the policy of Government on Naptha and other petroleum products; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) Government announced a comprehensive package to end the oil pool deficit on September 1, 1997. The Government also decided that henceforth the price of HSD would be on improt parity basis. Accordingly, the ex-storage point price of HSD has been revised as under:

Effective dates	Ex-storage point price (excluding excise duty etc.) Rs./KL
07.11.97	7918.04
25.12.97	7996.84
01.03.98	7839.24
04.04.98	7645.47
20.05.98	7536.89
09.01.99	6722.37

The prices of petrol and Kerosene are administered by the Government and recently there was no increase in the prices of these products. As per the details of the phased dismantling of administered pricing mechanism, the prices of certain products like Naphtha, F.O., LSHS, LDO etc. are decontrolled effective 1.4.98 and accordingly their selling prices are fixed by oil companies on market considerations. Policies & pricing in respect of petroleum products are transparent.

Progress in Exploration of Hydro-Carbons

422. DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the progress of exploration efforts in the field of hydrocarbons since 1992-93;

(b) whether it is a fact that the pace of discovery of new reserves has considerably slowed down;

(c) if so, the reasons thereof; and

(d) what steps are being taken to accelerate the pace of exploration activity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Following exploratory efforts have been made by ONGC/OIL/J.V. Private companies and Directorate General of Hydrocarbon (DGH) in various basins of India since 1992-93 to 1997-98:

Seismic Survey	
Onland	
2D Standard Line Kilometer	149322
2D Ground Line Kilometer	23865
3D Standard Square Kilometer	5253
3D Square Kilometer	167
3D Ground Line Kilometer	11744
Offshore (2D + 3D)	
Line Kilometer	319636
Square Kilometer	2649
Exploratory drilling	
Offshore ('000M)	628.1
Onshore ('000M)	2336.4
Total ('000M)	2964.5

(b) Reserve accretion during the VIIIth Plan period has not been commensurate with the exploratory inputs.

(c) In Hydrocarbon exploration, there is no direct relationship between input and output. The possible reasons for less reserve accretion in recent years could be:

(i) Large & medium sized prospects in geologically similer areas and at shallower depths have possibly been discovered through the current technologies.

(ii) Future discoveries may possibly be in geologically and logistically difficult areas and at deeper depth which require state-of-the-art technologies besides new approach/ strategy towards exploration of such areas.

(iii) The exploratory efforts were hitherto concentrated mainly in 6 petroliferous Cat-I basin with little efforts in other basins;

(d) Following steps are being taken to accelerate the exploration activities:

(i) ONGC/OIL have drawn a recast programme for IX Five Year Plan.

(ii) Opening up of new areas by DGH and National Oil Companies.

(iii) Hiring of expert consultancy services for integrated Basin Modelling.

(iv) Increased participation by private companies in exploration under New Exploration Licensing Policy.

उत्तर प्रदेश में गैस कनैक्शन के लिये प्रतीक्षा सूची

423. **श्री डी०पी० यादव:** क्या **पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस** मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) वर्ष 1998 के अंत में देश भर में गैस कनेक्शन लेने के लिये प्रतीक्षा सूची में कुल कितने लोग हैं और उसमें से उत्तर प्रदेश में प्रतीक्षा सूची में दर्ज लोगों की संख्या क्या है; और

(ख) उत्तर प्रदेश की प्रतीक्षा सूची कब तक समाप्त होने की संभावना है और तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है?

पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री संतोष कुमार गंगवार): (क) 31.12.1998 की स्थिति के अनुसार देश में सा०क्षे०उ० तेल कंपनियों के एल पी जी डिस्ट्रीब्यूटरों के यहां प्रतीक्षा सूची में दर्ज व्यक्तियों की संख्या लगभग 133 लाख थी, जिसमें उत्तर प्रदेश राज्य के 14.11 लाख व्यक्ति सम्मिलित हैं।

(ख) प्रतीक्षा सूची के प्रति नए कनेक्शनों का जारी किया जाना अन्य बातों के साथ-साथ उत्पाद की उपलब्धता, वर्तमान डिस्ट्रीब्यूटरों के पास उपलब्ध स्लेक, हाल ही में स्थापित की गई डिस्ट्रीब्यूटरशिपों को बनाए रखने के लिए न्यूनतम आबंटन आदि पर निर्भर करता है। आयात और स्वदेशी उत्पादन के माध्यम से एल पी जी की बढ़ी हुई अनुमानित उपलब्धता से भविष्य में और अधिक कनेक्शन जारी करने की योजना है और वर्ष 2000-2001 तक पूरी प्रतीक्षा सूची को निपटा लेने का अनुमान है।

Delegation of Powers to District Administration in respect of Petroleum Products

424. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry have delegated its powers to district Magistrates in respect of revival, reconstitution, resitement, dual operation of dealership/distributorship of petroleum products;

(b) whether the District administration sometimes harass the Oil Corporation officers by misinterpreting the procedures; and

(c) whether Government would issue circular to State Government not to harass the Oil Corporation officers and should contact State Level Coordinators only in case of getting clarification on some points of disputes to give free hand to the PSU's officers?